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THE CONDOR

An Illustrated Magazine
of Western Ornithology

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EDITORIAL NOTES

By Executive Order No. 1019, dated February 3, 1909, the "Hawaiian Islands Reservation" was established. This national bird preserve includes Laysan, Necker, and adjacent small islands, upon which great numbers of pelagic birds nest, such as Albatrosses, Shearwaters, and Terns. Persistent rumors have circulated in the newspapers of late, to the effect that Japanese were planning to land on the rookeries to destroy every bird obtainable, the feathers to be saved for various commercial purposes and the bodies to be made into fertilizer. The fact that not a few species, which are confined in the breeding season to these small islands would thus be exterminated, makes the establishment of this preserve with little doubt the most important step, from a strictly ornithological standpoint, in the history of bird preservation in this country. The annihilation of *species* was threatened.

For the good work in securing the necessary steps in the accomplishment of this highly commendable act, ornithologists have to thank Dr. T. S. Palmer, of the Bureau of Biological Survey, and Mr. Frank Bond, Chief Clerk of the General Land Office.

It is needless to say that the laws of the United States will be enforced, as gun-boats patrol the Hawaiian waters continually.

It is hoped that, before the next number of this magazine is issued, subscribers will receive their copies of the Ten-year Index. Its compiler, Mr. H. B. Kaeding, is at work on the

revised proofs. However, Mr. W. O. Emerson, who has charge of the financing, states that only about \$100.00 has been raised, whereas the total cost of the Index will be in the neighborhood of \$200.00. This lack of financial support will be the cause of any possible delay. Such casualty *should* not occur.

One of the most enjoyable events in the history of the Cooper Club was the Annual Dinner held at the Bismarck Café in San Francisco on the evening of January 16, 1909. There were twenty-four members present, occupying comfortably the single long table in the Fish Room. Toward the close of the banquet the toastmaster, Dr. W. K. Fisher, announced that this occasion might be fairly considered as a send-off for Mr. Edmund Heller who was about to leave to join the Roosevelt African Expedition. Mr. Heller was introduced and gave an insight into the conditions under which the collector has to work in the "Dark Continent," he having already experienced them as a member of an expedition sent there in 1905 by the Field Museum. President D'Evelyn was then called upon and spoke humorously of the various activities of the Club. State Game Warden Vogelsang gave a most entertaining account of his experiences in carrying on the work of the California Fish Commission. Prof. W. E. Ritter commented further upon the good work accomplished by Mr. Vogelsang, and closed the evening's program by discussing the desirability of the establishment of a public zoological park on this coast something like that in New York City.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

CAMPS AND CRUISES | OF AN | ORNITHOLOGIST | By | FRANK M. CHAPMAN | Curator[etc., 5 lines]. | With 250 Photographs from Nature | by the Author | [vignette] | New York | D. Appleton and Company | 1908. 8vo, pp. i-xvi, 1-432. (Cloth, \$3.00 net.)

Mr. Chapman's latest book is a record of adventure; it presents, too, a great amount of biographical ornithology. The combination results in a volume of extreme interest to the ordinary reader and the ornithologist alike. The photographic illustrations about which much of the narrative centers are of the highest order; they are each one illustrative of some habit or special feature in the habitat of the subject.

The matter incorporated into the "Camps and Cruises" was secured by the author during his expeditions after material for the splendid bird groups executed during the past seven years at the American Museum of Natural History. The opportunities thus afforded are here shown to have been utilized to the very best advantage.

As usual with Mr. Chapman's work the camera played a large part in his field studies. In the "Introduction" we are given new hints as to methods to be employed in securing intimate photographic acquaintance with wary

birds. The "umbrella blind" is illustrated and described as being the most successful as well as convenient contrivance yet devised for the purpose.

Among the "Part" titles, especially indicative of subject matter, may be cited the following:—The Bird-Life of Two Atlantic Coast Islands; Gardiner's Island and Cobb's Island; Florida Bird-Life; Pelican Island, Cuthbert Rookery, etc.; Bahama Bird-Life: The Flamingo, Egg Birds, etc.; Bird-Life in Western Canada: The White Pelican, etc.

Naturally of most interest to us is the Part (VI) entitled "Bird Studies in California", with the following divisions: The Coastal Mountains at Piru; The Coast at Monterey; The Farallones; The San Joaquin Valley at Los Banos; Lower Klamath Lake; The Sierras. Each of these sketches is thoroly enjoyable and seems to be for the most part beyond any reasonable criticism.

The habit of the Northern Phalarope of securing food particles by whirling about in shallow water and thus stirring up the sediment is interestingly described (page 271) and illustrated by two photos. This significance of the Phalaropes' behavior, however, is not new, as implied, for it had been clearly set forth by D. W. Prentiss, Jr., and William Palmer several years ago. [See *Osprey*, Vol. I (new series), July 1902, p. 100.]

We are informed (page 257) that the Desert Song Sparrow "owes its colors to the direct action of the aridity of its environment, and not to a natural selection which has brought it into a fancied harmony with its immediate surroundings." The finality with which this statement is made is not at all justified by any evidence known to the reviewer. Here seems to be another case of unwarranted deduction from Beebe's meager and altogether (as fully admitted by himself) inconclusive experiments with caged birds.

Whatever of further fault can be found in minor points, it must remain indisputable that Mr. Chapman's "Camps and Cruises of an Ornithologist" is the most entertaining bird book we have read for many a year.—J. G.

CATALOGUE OF A COLLECTION OF BIRDS FROM GUATEMALA by NED DEARBORN, Assistant Curator of Ornithology. [=Field Museum of Natural History. Publication 125. Ornithological Series. Vol. I, No. 3; pp. 69-136. 1 plate, 3 maps.]

Following a brief description of localities visited, and route traversed, is a careful systematic account of the 305 species and subspecies of birds that were taken. The collection comprised 1187 specimens, of which Dr. Dearborn himself, in three months, collected one thousand, while the remainder were secured at different times by Messrs. Edmund

Heller and Charles M. Barber. Carefully detailed information is given as to the place and manner of occurrence of each species, and, in many instances, valuable data regarding the moult is placed on record; while the exact information relating to the color, in life, of the "soft parts" of many species, often so remarkable in tropical birds, and usually so altered in prepared specimens, should be of the greatest value not only to the systematic worker as such, but also to the curator who desires to place mounted specimens of such birds on exhibition, and would wish them to have something of the appearance they bore in life.

Saucerotlea cyanura guatemalæ, *Diglossa montana*, *Regulus satrapa clarus*, and *Planesticus tristis rubicundus* are described as new, while the known range of several species is considerably extended, noticeably that of *Vireo belli* among United States birds. Maps are given showing the distribution of the races of *Planesticus tristis* and *Calocitta formosa*, there is a plate showing the breast and remarkably developed trachea of the male *Ortalis vetula plumbeiceps*, while a map illustrating the route followed by Dr. Dearborn forms the frontispiece.

The brief notes regarding the life histories of many species are of such interest as to cause one to regret that this phase of the subject was not dwelt on at greater length. As a whole the paper must be regarded as an exceedingly valuable addition to the literature of Central American ornithology, tho several unfortunate typographical errors detract somewhat from the appearance of the publication.

One notes with surprise that this paper is only the third of the first volume of the ornithological publications of the Field Museum, one of the largest institutions in the United States, if not in the world, devoted entirely to natural history.—H. S. S.

PARTS II AND III (March and September, 1908) of GODMAN'S "MONOGRAPH OF THE PETRELS" have been received.* As remarked of Part I, reviewed on page 96, Volume X, of this magazine, the above-titled brochure is perhaps the most elegantly gotten up bird publication of recent years. The splendid hand-colored plates constitute the feature of the work, altho the care which has evidently been bestowed upon the text both technically and typographically appeals to the student of ornithology with scarcely any less force.

Part II consists of pages 69 to 152, plates 20 to 39. Two genera are treated, *Cymodroma*, with one species, and *Puffinus*, with 24 species. Of the latter genus the following species are ascribed to the west coast of North America:

*Published by Witherby & Co., 326 High Holborn, London.